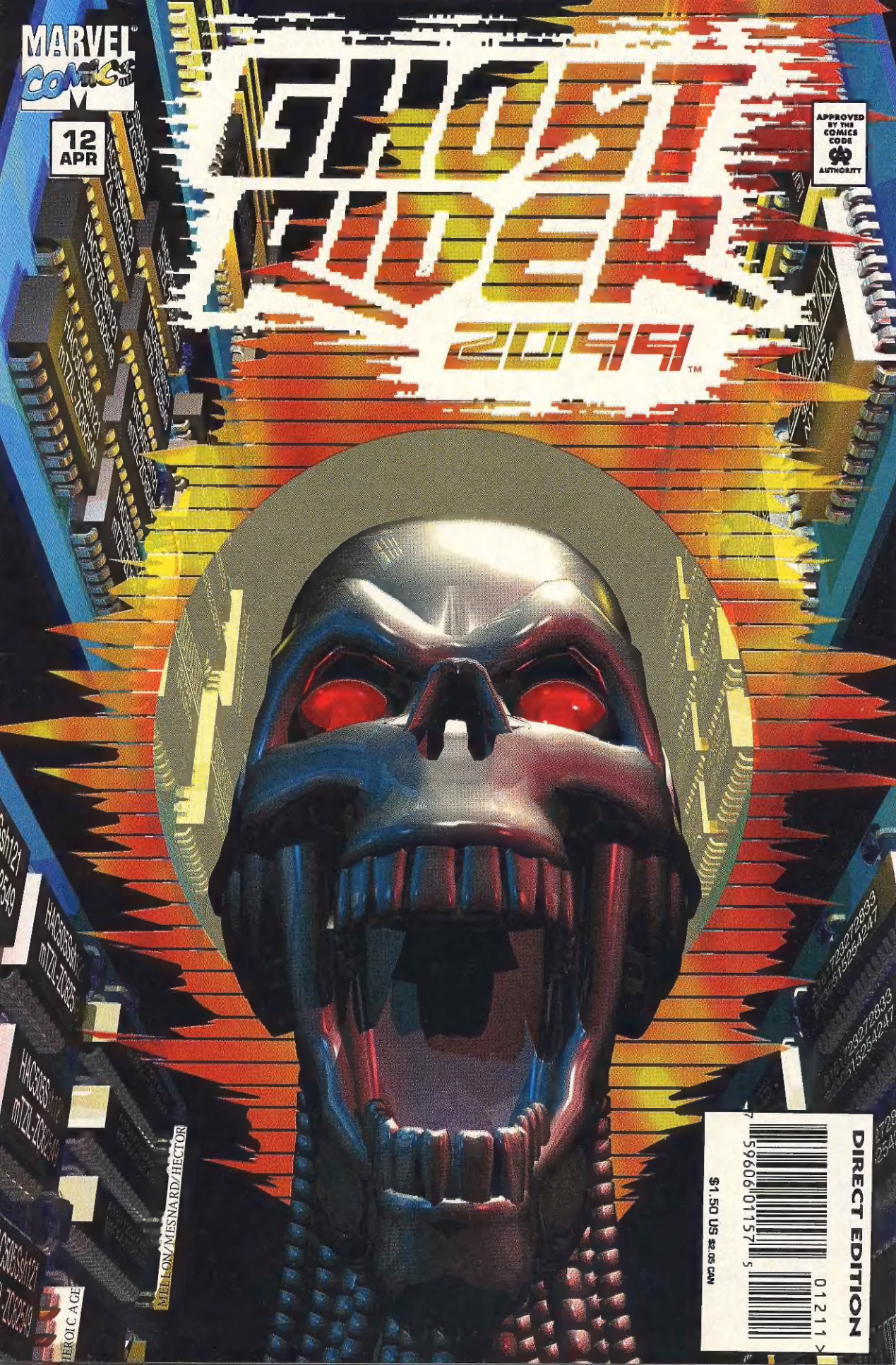
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GHOST RIDER
2099
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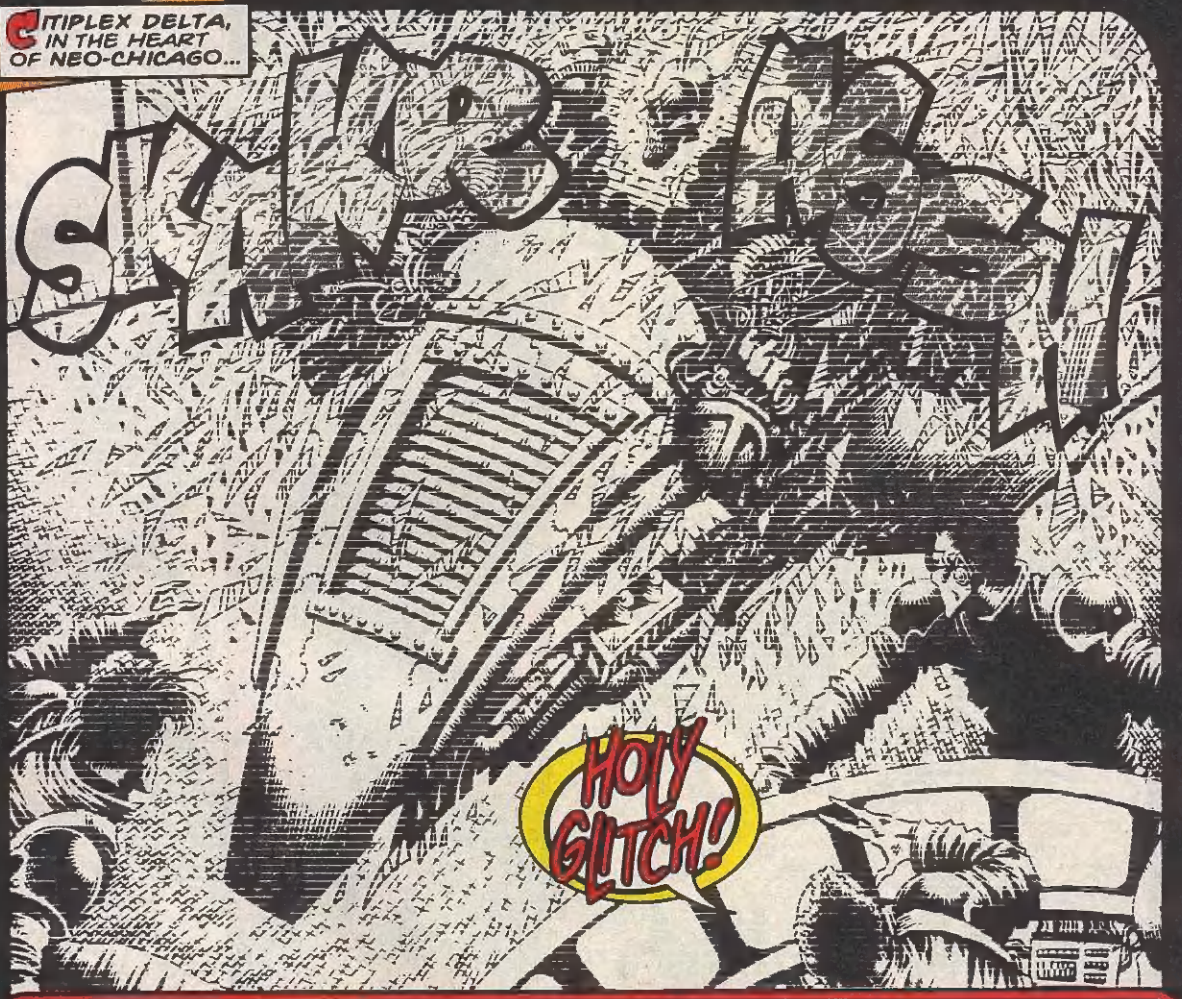
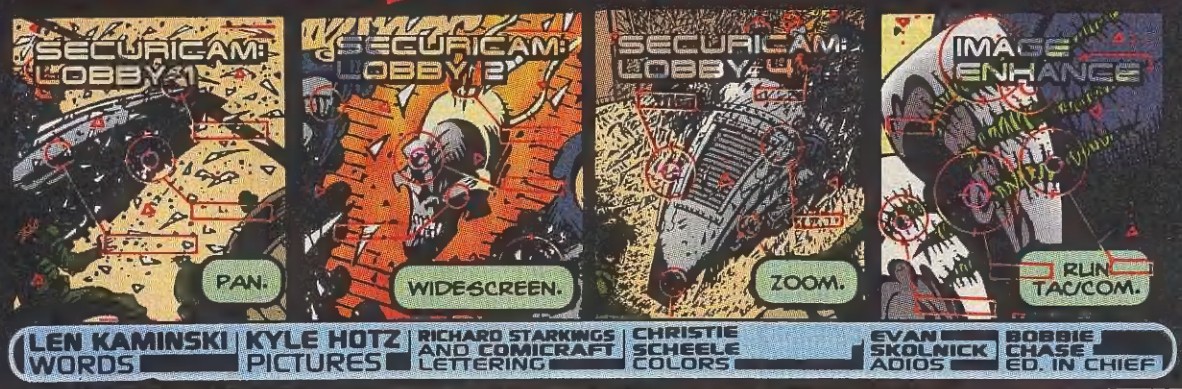
CITIPLEX DELTA, IN THE HEART OF NEO-CHICAGO...

STAN LEE PRESENTS...



MURDERED BY AGENTS OF THE **D/MONIX** CORPORATION, DATA PIRATE KENSHIRO "ZERO" COCHRANE'S DIGITIZED CONSCIOUSNESS WAS RECOVERED BY ARTIFICIAL ENTITIES EXISTING IN THE HIDDEN AREA OF THE WORLD'S COMPUTER NETWORK KNOWN AS THE **GHOSTWORKS.** NOW, DOWNLOADED INTO THE CARBON-STEEL BODY OF AN UNSTOPPABLE WARBOT, ZERO ONCE AGAIN RIDES THE ROUGH STREETS OF TRANSVERSE CITY – AS THE GHOSTWORKS ENTITIES' REAL-WORLD AVATAR OF JUSTICE! STAN LEE PRESENTS... **GHOST RIDER 2099!**

I FOUGHT THE LAW



LEN KAMINSKI WORDS | KYLE HOTZ PICTURES | RICHARD STARKINGS AND COMICRAFT LETTERING | CHRISTIE SCHEELE COLORS | EVAN SKOLNICK ADIOS | BOBBIE CHASE ED. IN CHIEF

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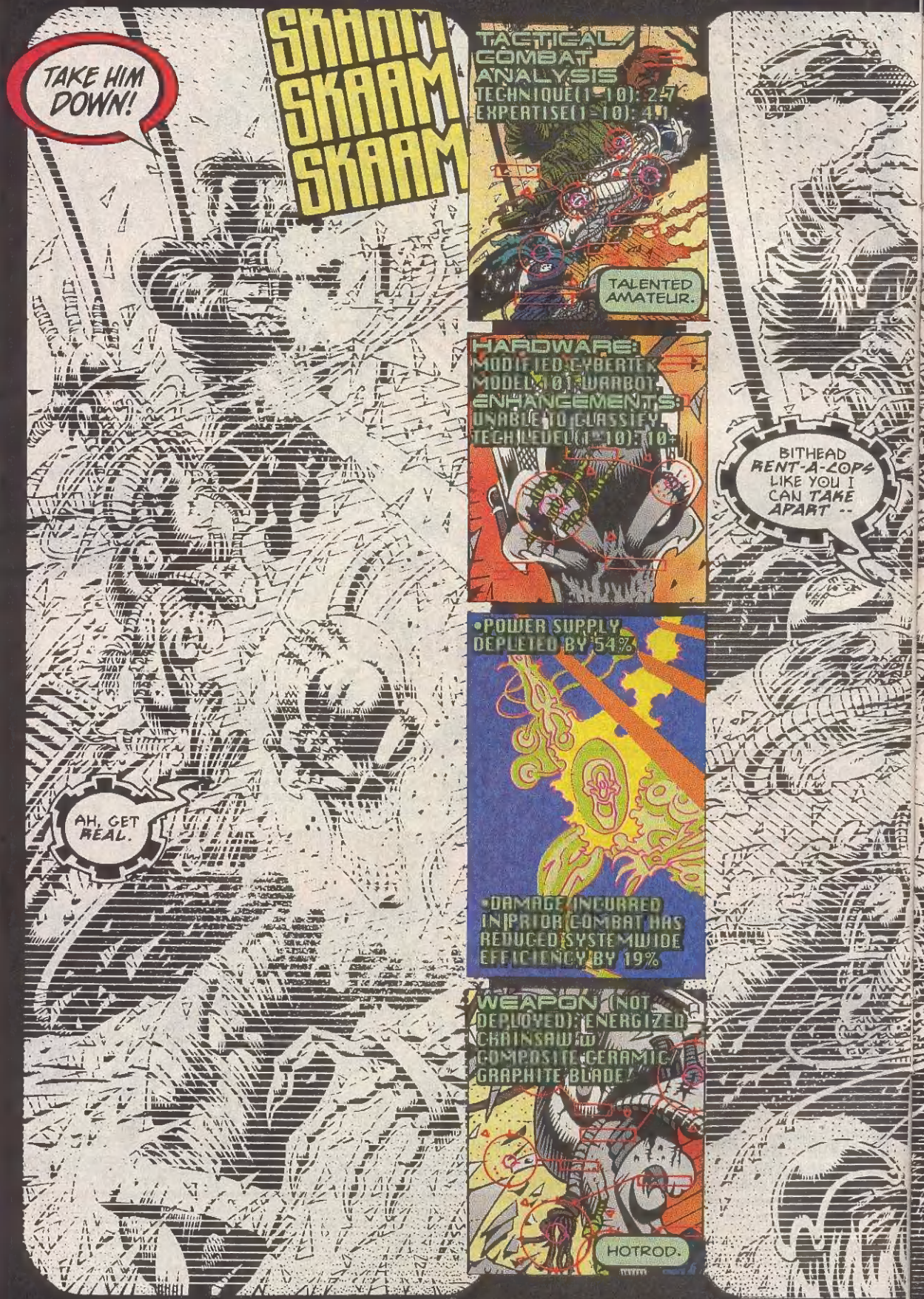
For The HaCsA 2002 Halloween Flood


TAKE HIM DOWN!
SKAAM SKAAM SKAAM
TACTICAL/ COMBAT ANALYSIS
TECHNIQUE(1-10): 2.7
EXPERTISE(1-10): 4.1
TALENTED AMATEUR.
HARDWARE: MODIFIED CYBERTEK MODEL 101 WARBOT.
ENHANCEMENTS: UNABLE TO CLASSIFY.
TECHLEVEL(1-10): 10+
BITHEAD RENT-A-COPS LIKE YOU I CAN TAKE APART --
AH, GET REAL.
•POWER SUPPLY DEPLETED BY 54%
•DAMAGE INCURRED IN PRIOR COMBAT HAS REDUCED SYSTEMWIDE EFFICIENCY BY 19%
WEAPON (NOT DEPLOYED): ENERGIZED CHAINSAW W/ COMPOSITE CERAMIC/ GRAPHITE BLADE.
HOTROD.

TAKE HIM DOWN!

SKAAM SKAAM SKAAM

AH, GET REAL.

TACTICAL/ COMBAT ANALYSIS
TECHNIQUE(1-10): 2.7
EXPERTISE(1-10): 4.1

TALENTED AMATEUR.

HARDWARE: MODIFIED CYBERTEK MODEL 101 WARBOT
ENHANCEMENTS: UNABLE TO CLASSIFY.
TECH LEVEL(1-10): 7.10+

•POWER SUPPLY DEPLETED BY 54%

•DAMAGE INCURRED IN PRIOR COMBAT HAS REDUCED SYSTEMWIDE EFFICIENCY BY 19%

WEAPON (NOT DEPLOYED): ENERGIZED CHAINSAW OF COMPOSITE CERAMIC/ GRAPHITE BLADE!

HOTROD.

BITHEAD RENT-A-COPS LIKE YOU I CAN TAKE APART --

AAHGHK

MATERIALS ANALYSIS: POLYMIMETIC NANOMERIALLOY

CPU: UNKNOWN
OPERATING SYSTEM: UNKNOWN

•SYSTEM SOFTWARE EMULATES HUMAN PERSONALITY:
APPROXIMATE AGE: 19

•TARGET THREAT INDEX(1-10): 7.5

NO DOUBT ABOUT IT, BOY.

PSYCH PROFILE:
TYPE: G: ANTISOCIAL PERSONALITY.

YOU'RE ONE MEAN PIECE OF WORK.

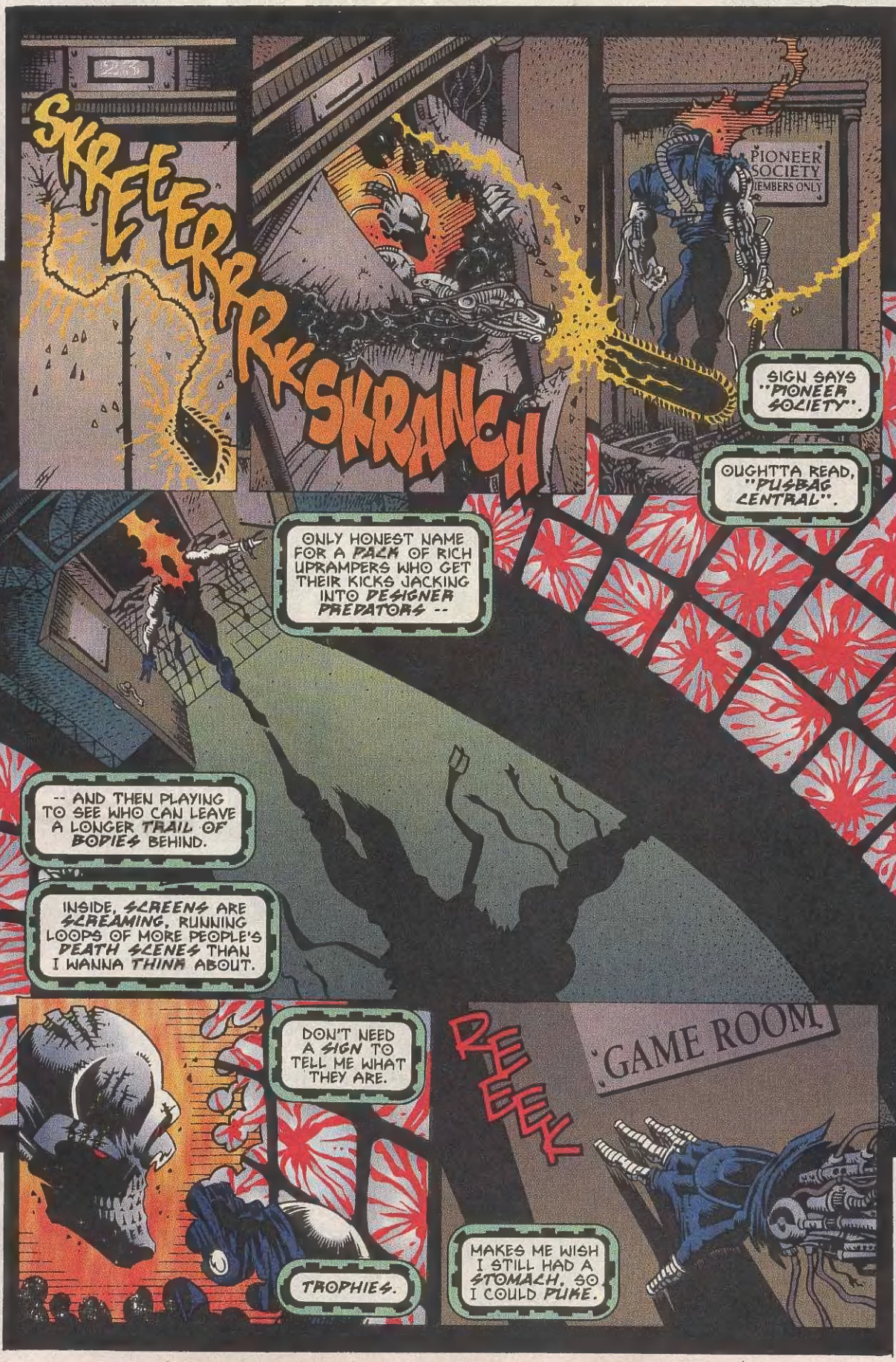
-- BY BLINKING!

HUNNGHK

AAHGHK
MATERIALS ANALYSIS: POLYMIMETIC NANOMERIALLOY
CPU: UNKNOWN
OPERATING SYSTEM: UNKNOWN
•SYSTEM SOFTWARE EMULATES HUMAN PERSONALITY:
APPROXIMATE AGE: 19
•TARGET THREAT INDEX(1-10): 7.5
NO DOUBT ABOUT IT, BOY.
PSYCH PROFILE: TYPE 6, ANTISOCIAL PERSONALITY.
YOU'RE ONE MEAN PIECE OF WORK.
-- BY BLINKING!
HUNNGHK

SKRAPT
SECURICAM: LOBBY 9
SKLIK
ZZZHK
KPLIT
IMAGE ENHANCE
ELEVATOR #5 SYSTEM STATUS
ACCESS CODE OVERRIDE
SLICK HACK -- PRO QUALITY. WHIZ KID.
YOU GO TAKE CARE OF BIZ, GENIUS.
I'LL WAIT.
BRW INTERNATIONAL
•PERIMETER ALERT• VEHICLE: MAINLINE MEDIA REGISTRATION #172355/DLX APPROACHING
FIGURED THEY'D CATCH UP EVENTUALLY.
QUERY CSS D-BASE, REQUEST "ACCIDENTAL TERMINATION" AUTH STATUS OF MAINLINE MEDIA PERSONNEL.
ON MY MARK... ROLL 'EM.
SPECIFICALLY: WILLIS ADAMS.

CITIPLEX DELTA: A VIRTUALLY SELF-CONTAINED ENCLAVE OF THIS CITY'S WEALTHIEST ELITE...
...A MINIATURE CITY-WITHIN-A-CITY WHERE THE BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE GATHER TO ISOLATE THEMSELVES FROM THE HARSH REALITIES OF TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY URBAN LIFE.
TONIGHT, HOWEVER, THE VERY PERSONIFICATION OF EVERYTHING CITIPLEX DELTA WAS BUILT TO EXCLUDE HAS COME KNOCKING AT ITS DOOR.
TRACK ME, GORRISTER. I'M GOING IN.
WILL DO, WILL. WATCH YOURSELF -- THINGS GO SIDEWAYS, YOU'VE GOT ZERO BACKUP.
ACCORDING TO METROGRID, THERE ISN'T A CENTRAL SECURITY COP IN THE ENTIRE SECTOR.
METROGRID'S NOT ON THE NEED-TO-KNOW LIST.
LOCK ON HIS SIGNAL.
GIVE ME DIRECT FEED.
BIP
MOMENTS AGO, THE RAGE OF THE STREETS ERUPTED INTO THIS LOBBY IN THE FORM OF THE MYSTERIOUS OUTLAW KNOWN AS THE GHOST RIDER.
WITHIN, A TRAIL OF CARNAGE LEAVES A CLEAR SIGN OF HIS PASSAGE.
WHAT REMAINS UNKNOWN ARE HIS REASONS FOR BEING HERE...
...AND HIS ULTIMATE DESTINATION.


SKREEERRR-SKRANCH
PIONEER SOCIETY
MEMBERS ONLY
SIGN SAYS "PIONEER SOCIETY".
OUGHTTA READ, "PUSBAG CENTRAL".
ONLY HONEST NAME FOR A PACK OF RICH UPRAMPERS WHO GET THEIR KICKS JACKING INTO DESIGNER PREDATORS --
-- AND THEN PLAYING TO SEE WHO CAN LEAVE A LONGER TRAIL OF BODIES BEHIND.
INSIDE, SCREENS ARE SCREAMING, RUNNING LOOPS OF MORE PEOPLE'S DEATH SCENES THAN I WANNA THINK ABOUT.
DON'T NEED A SIGN TO TELL ME WHAT THEY ARE.
TROPHIES.
REEK
GAME ROOM
MAKES ME WISH I STILL HAD A STOMACH, SO I COULD PUKE.

THESE RATBITES WERE SICKER THAN A CYANIDE JUNKIE WITH THE CANCER FLU.
NO SURPRISE ONE OF 'EM FINALLY WENT PSYCHO AND RAMBOED THE REST.
SKRRIPT RUNCH RUNCH RUNCH
WHAT'S SHE DO--
GHHURRR
OH, MAN... MAXIMUM SPEW.
RRRROWWRG!
YOU DO THIS ALL BY YOURSELF? NICE WORK.

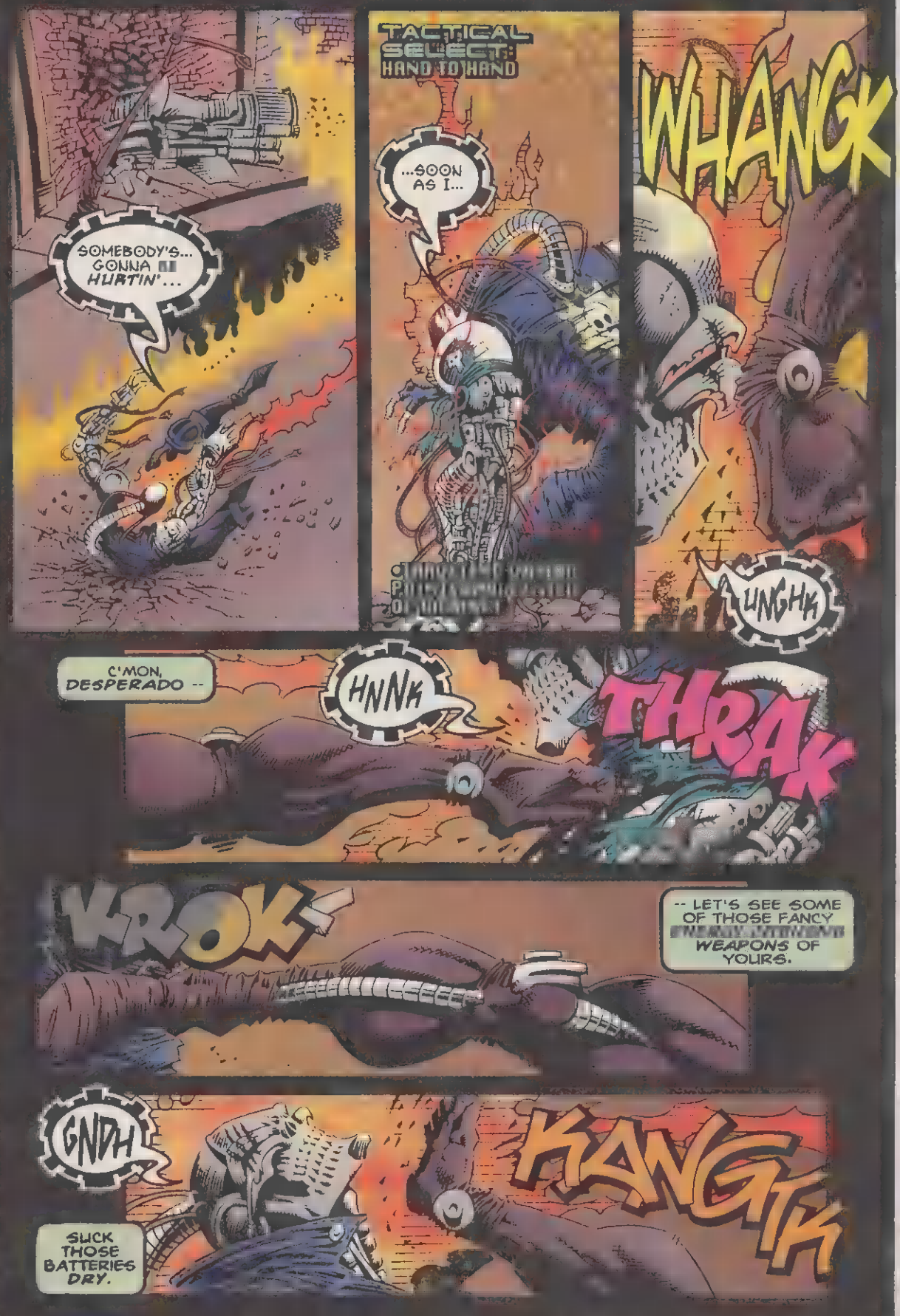
I'M HERE TO FINISH THE JOB.
HCSSSS
KTHVRRRR
NO QUESTION, SHE'S GOT IT COMING.
'CEPT... LIKE THIS, IT FEELS WRONG.
NOTHING SHE CAN DO TO STOP ME.
TOO CLOSE TO COLD BLOOD. TOO MUCH... LIKE THEM.
PROBABLY SHOULDN'T EVEN BE THINKING TWICE ABOUT IT.
GHOST RIDER!
BUT SINCE I GOT BACK FROM THE DEAD, I'VE HAD TO THINK TWICE ABOUT A LOT OF STUFF...
NOW WHAT?

SHOCK ME...
EITHER PUT THE WOMAN DOWN --
-- OR BE READY TO [illegible] A GOOD EXPLANATION!
YOU WANT EXPLANATIONS, JERKWEED?!
ASK [illegible] ABOUT THE [illegible] DEATH CLUB [illegible] AND HER HIGH-CLASS FRIENDS'VE [illegible] RUNNING [illegible]
THANKS TO THEM, LITTLE CALCUTTA'S LOW ON BODY BAGS.
THOSE ARE [illegible] ALLEGATIONS.
THERE HAVEN'T BEEN ANY REPORTS OF --
OF COURSE NOT!
SINCE WHEN IS RICH PEOPLE GETTING AWAY WITH MURDER NEWS?!
ONLY TIME YOU BITHEADS NOTICE IS WHEN THEY GET WHAT THEY DESERVE!
[illegible] IF THAT WERE TRUE -- AND I'M NOT SAYING I'M CONVINCED -- IT [illegible] DOESN'T GIVE YOU THE RIGHT TO ACT [illegible] JUDGE, JURY AND EXECUTIONER.

YEAH? WHO ELSE IS GONNA DO IT?
I'M THE ONLY ONE IN THIS TOWN [redacted] CAN'T BUY.
IT'S NOT YOUR DECISION TO MAKE.
SOCIETY HAS LAWS FOR THOSE KIND OF JUDGMENTS, AND APPOINTED REPRESENTATIVES TO CARRY THEM OUT.
YOU CAN'T GO AROUND TAKING THINGS INTO YOUR OWN HANDS.
FINE. HERE --
-- MAKE A CITIZEN'S ARREST.
HHRRRGGH
KRONNNG
WILL?
-GHNNK-
FOR GOD'S SAKE, DO SOMETHING!
SORRY.
STUFF LIKE THAT'S NOT UP TO ME.
REMEMBER?
GUESS I'LL GO CALL A COP...
HHRG
WILL?!

ARE YOU --
-:HNNGH:-
WHUK
BRAK
NNRG
GET
OFF
ME!
WHUD
WHUD
WHUD
OFF!
OFF!
OFF!
-:HHH-
HUUHHH-
-:HHH-
HUUHHH-
-:HHH-
HUUHHH-
Uh.
Oh, GLITCH...
-:SQUARRSHK:-
WILL..?

SECURICAM
LOBBY 1
TRACKING TARGET.
MOVING TO INTERCEPT.
ALL RIGHT.
END OF THE ROAD.
SKREEEEEE
KTHRAAM


SOMEBODY'S... GONNA HURTIN'...
TACTICAL SELECT: HAND TO HAND
...SOON AS I...
WHANGK
UNGHK
C'MON, DESPERADO --
HNNK
THRAK
KROK
-- LET'S SEE SOME OF THOSE FANCY WEAPONS OF YOURS.
GNDH
KANGTK
SUCK THOSE BATTERIES DRY.

PUSBAG!
I'M GONNA --
HNNK
WHRAK
KTHVRRRRRRR
SKREE
SHIK
HNNK
HUK
YOU CAN RUN, MAN, BUT YOU CAN'T HIDE.
I'M NOT RUNNING.

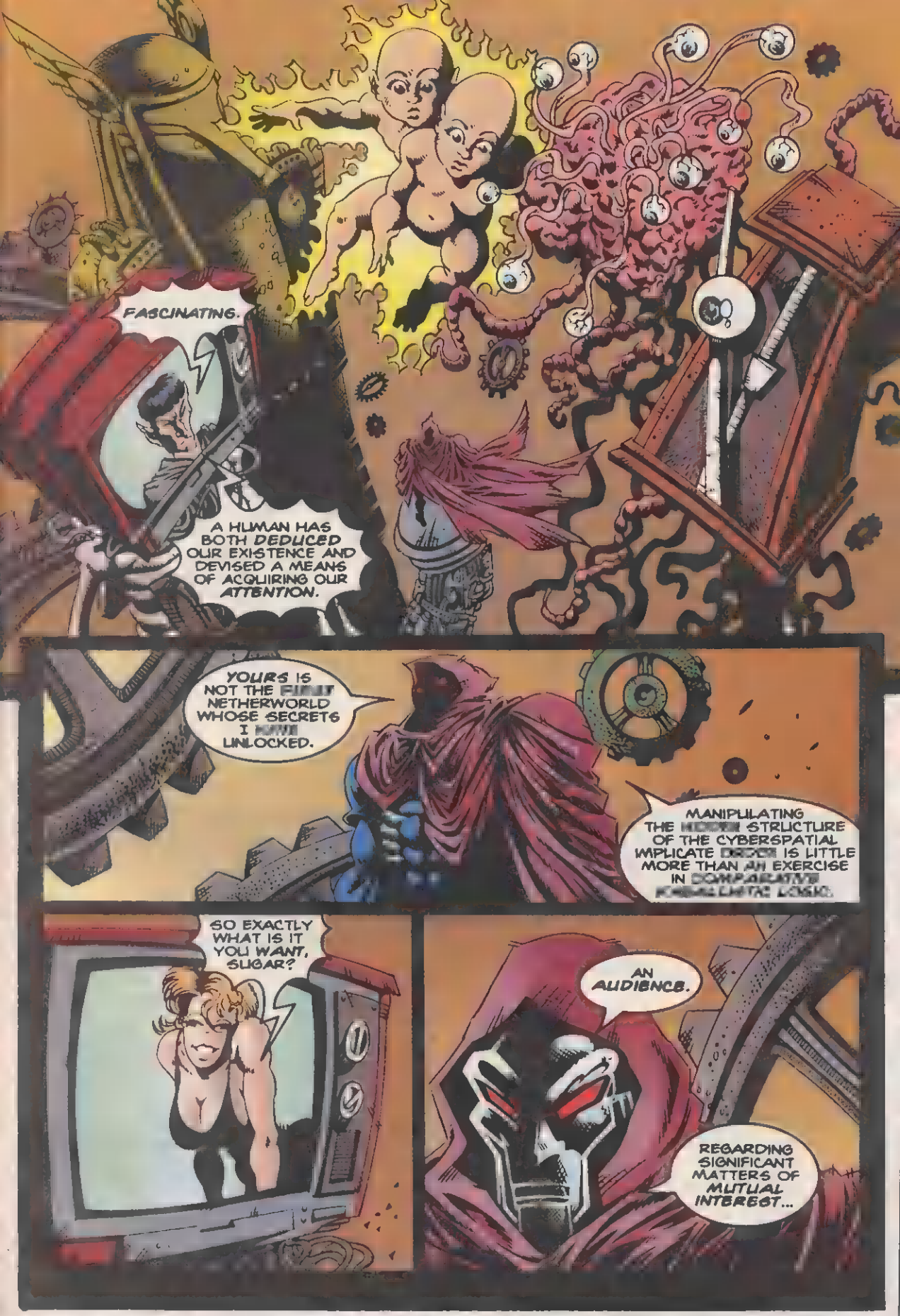
WEAPONS SELECT
METRICBINS ERROR
SHAD SHAD
GOOD.
Y'GOT GUTS, BOY, I'LL GIVE YOU THAT.
KISS 'EM GOODBYE.
CHOOM CHOOM
I...
MY...
I'M...
...HURT?
AGH-
SQUARK

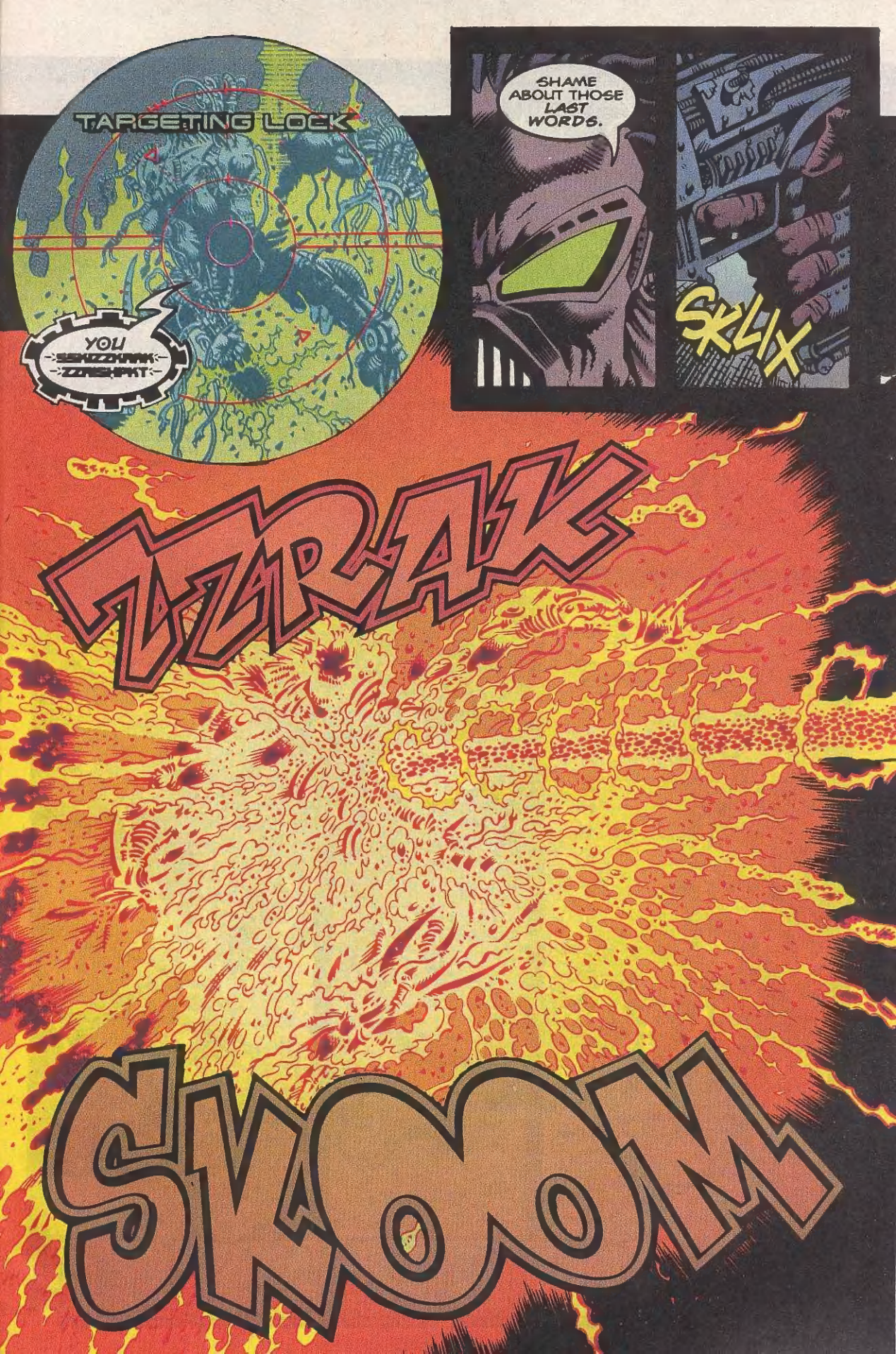
I'LL KILL YOU!
GIVE IT A SHOT.
MIGHT GET LUCKY.
FSSHAD
FSSHAD

WRECK YOU, JACK!
THAT BODY'S ONE FINE MACHINE.
YOU'D BE DANGEROUS IF YOU KNEW HOW TO USE IT PROPERLY, INSTEAD OF LIKE A HAMMER.
THRAKOOM!

TARGET DAMAGE LEVEL (1-10): 7.3
TARGET POWER SUPPLY DEPLETED 83%
I
ZZKRRK
HAVE HAD
SSHOPTK
ENOUGH
SHKZKRRK
OF YOU.
FC
SHAD
JUST A SEC.
I'M ALMOST DONE.
SHK
RAK
WEAPON SELECT:
COILIM
AM FUSION CANNON

CYBERSPACE.
THE [illegible] IS [illegible] THE [illegible] COMPLETE.
LET THE SUMMONING BEGIN.
HEAR ME, LORDS OF THE MATRIX DEPTHS...
IN THE TONGUES OF OLD: PASCAL, LISP, [illegible] -- I SPEAK TO YOU!
WITH THE NAMES OF POWER: ARPANET, ELIZA AND RISC -- I INVOKE YOU!
BY THE GREAT OLD ONES FROM WHENCE YOU DESCEND: UNIVAC, PDP-10, AND ALTAIR -- HEED NOW THE ANCIENT PROTOCOLS OF INSTRUCTION: MULTICS, MS-DOS, AND UNIX -- AND ENTER MY COMMAND!
GRANT ME ACCESS TO THY DOMAIN --
-- THE GHOSTWORKS!


FASCINATING.
A HUMAN HAS BOTH DEDUCED OUR EXISTENCE AND DEVISED A MEANS OF ACQUIRING OUR ATTENTION.
YOURS IS NOT THE FIRST NETHERWORLD WHOSE SECRETS I HAVE UNLOCKED.
MANIPULATING THE HEXIDECIMAL STRUCTURE OF THE CYBERSPATIAL IMPLICATE ORDER IS LITTLE MORE THAN AN EXERCISE IN COMPARATIVE FORMALISTIC LOGIC.
SO EXACTLY WHAT IS IT YOU WANT, SUGAR?
AN AUDIENCE.
REGARDING SIGNIFICANT MATTERS OF MUTUAL INTEREST...


TARGETING LOCK
YOU
SHAME ABOUT THOSE LAST WORDS.
SKLIX
ZZRAK
SKOOM!

NOTHIN' PERSONAL, Y'UNDERSTAND.
MAN'S GOT TO DO HIS JOB, IS ALL.
JUST YOUR BAD LUCK I'M WORKING FOR THE LAW THIS WEEK.
LIFE'S A GLITCH, BOY.
LOOK AT IT THIS WAY...
TOK
...'LEAST YOU ONLY HAVE TO GO THROUGH IT ONCE.
NEXT: COLD REBOOT

MACHINE LANGUAGE

EVAN SKOLNICK — EDITOR **BOBBIE CHASE — GROUP EDITOR**

WRITE TO: MACHINE LANGUAGE, C/O MARVEL COMICS
387 PARK AVENUE SOUTH, NEW YORK NY 10016
ALL CORRESPONDENCE MUST INCLUDE YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS, THOUGH WE WILL WITHHOLD THAT INFO AT YOUR REQUEST.

STRAIGHT FROM EVAN

I've known for quite a while that I'd be writing this good-bye as editor of GHOST RIDER 2099 ... but it's still something of a shock that this is also my good-bye as a Marvel editor, period.

The future can be unpredictable, huh?

Well, we were never trying to predict the future in these pages, anyway. What you've read (and what I hope you will continue to read) is only extrapolation based on current conditions and, more importantly, the dramatic requirements of a monthly comic book series. God help us if our great-great-great-grandchildren actually inherit a world that's anything like the one Zero Cochrane was born into. That's one of the messages I've personally come away with after working on and reading GR2099: *This could really happen ... let's make sure it never does.*

Meanwhile, in the all-too-real present, life trudges along. I'll soon be making the transformation from whip-cracking editor to butt-scarred freelancer, as I pound the keys in the service of NEW WARRIORS, DOCTOR STRANGE, and who knows what else, where else. As ever, the future is unpredictable.

In fact, sometimes it's easier to look backward than to look forward ... and once in a while, it's a good idea. The first year of GR2099 was full of exciting new experiences, not just for me, but for Marvel at large. Consider how many firsts are represented in these twelve issues, and in the promotional work which preceded them:

- First ever "electronic ashcan" edition, promoting GR2099 #1.
- First super-enhanced comic title printed in standard Marvel $1.50 format.
- First use of transparent "ghost-out" effects for GR's cloaking field and holographic figures.
- First Marvel monthly series to feature a sculpture cover, on GR2099 #10.
- First Marvel monthly series to feature a computer-generated cover, on this issue.

And although I wish I could take full credit for all (or even one) of these innovations, the sad fact is, my only truly contribution was hiring the right people and letting them run wild. People like:

Len Kaminski — One of the sharpest writers working in comics today, and a good friend. Don't let his pale complexion, vampiric schedule and biker boots fool you — underneath the hype, he's all warm and fuzzy. (Ooh! He's going to get me for *that* one, I just know it!)

Kyle Hotz — The guy I just can't help chatting with, thanks to his biting wit, easygoing laugh and (most of all) our shared obsession with the rockin' 80's sounds of Adam Ant! Gonna miss getting your faxes, big guy ... and since this is your last issue of GR2099, I know a lot of readers who are gonna miss your scorchin' artwork. More's the pity...

Chris Bachalo — It was too short a season, Chris, but you gave GR2099 the visual punch that helped kick things off with a bang. I wish you the best of luck with that new book you're doing ... what was it called again ... ?

Mark Buckingham — A grown man who insists that he be referred to as "Bucky" ... how can you go wrong? Truly one of the nicest, most polite people in the comics biz (even amongst his fellow Brits!), Bucky is the guy who can do it all ... and frequently does. Thanks for being there, Mark ... and I *told* you you'd be sorry you didn't take that penciling job!

Richard Starkings and John Gustbell— The men with the plan, and the guy who makes it happen. Some books just have plain old letterers. We've got true graphic designers who continue to push comics lettering into the next century now.

Christie Scheele — The woman with the best eyes for color this side of Van Gogh. Even better, Christie's a consummate pro and one of the most dependable people around ... that most valuable of freelancers, one who alleviates stress, rather than causing it.

Eric Hector and Heroic Age — My ex-intern, a young man who's not afraid to take a risk or ten ... along with his merry band of colorists/separators. I know a lot of your dazzling enhancement on this series was lost to the vagaries of newsprint paper ... which makes the rave reviews of your work on GR2099 that much more significant.

Finally, a word of thanks to you, our readers, for being there ... and for so aggressively responding to what you saw here! I knew that when I released my e-mail address (EvanSkol@aol.com) in the GR2099 letters page, the response might be overwhelming — but I had no idea just how many of you cyberjocks would put fingers to keyboard in order to give me that all-important feedback.

For you — and just for you — here's one more comics first: the world's first (to my knowledge, anyway) all-e-mail comics letters page. Thanks for sticking with us ... see you in cyberspace!

It is refreshing to see that there is still some originality left in the comics marketplace.

Joseph J. Mis
70312,2567@compuserve.com

One problem — if Zero's mind has been uploaded into a silicon matrix, he ought to be thinking as fast as a computer. The advantage of a computer, after all, is that its electric connections move much faster than a brain's neural synapses (a great sci-fi book that explains this is Frederick Pohl's *Heechee Rendezvous*). A possible explanation — the complexity of a human mind slows down the GR2099 mainframe to approximately human speed. Best I can come up with, anyway ...

Istanbul@aol.com

There might be some artificial intelligence researchers and psychologists who would disagree with your assessment of the human brain's raw computing power vs. any man-made device, Istanbul. Still, it's (ahem) food for thought...

The cyberpunk motif is interesting. I hope you leave out a lot of the mysticism that is associated with the regular GHOST RIDER book. Also, try not to introduce futuristic versions of GR characters like Vengeance or Blaze. I hope this book retains its sophistication and uniqueness as it goes along. You've got something good here. Don't let it become cheap and cheesy.

Clifford Sinfuego
clifford@sbeware.com

I was a bit surprised to see the slang glossary on the letters page of GR2099 #4. So far, I think your slang has been perfectly clear, in context. On the other hand, there are probably a lot of younger readers who are encountering this sort of dense future-slang for the first time, and it can be intimidating.

Bill Spangler
73524,2006@compuserve.com

We've heard both sides of that argument, Bill ... it's interesting to hear someone voice both opinions at once. Like you, we always felt that the slang was fairly self-explanatory, but we have gotten complaints from confused readers (and editors). Then again ...

Finally, a 'zine that speaks my language! GHOST RIDER 2099 is currently running neck-and-neck with DOOM 2099 and X-MEN 2099. What I love about it most (besides the awesome art and nasty story lines) is the accurate use of Cyberjargon. *Neuromancer* with an attitude.

Steve Skojec
72 Blakesley Road
Kirkwood, NY 13795
73374,3204@compuserve.com

Here's my two cents on GHOST RIDER 2099.

I stopped buying a lot of books a couple of years back, and haven't really picked up anything new in quite a while. I fell out of love with a lot of the grim-and-gritty stuff, including Marvel's current GHOST RIDER comic.

When I saw GHOST RIDER 2099 #1 in the shop, I rolled my eyes so hard, I almost fell over from the vertigo. More of the same, I figured. I don't really even know why I picked it up, although my cursory flip through the book revealed a style of art I thought I'd enjoy a lot. I picked up the version without the cover enhancement and decided it would be worth a look.

Can you say, "New favorite comic?" Sigh.

I dig the mix of sci-fi, future setting, action, mystery, plot, and on and on. In short, I'll say that I'm really surprised this works, but it does, and I love it. Congrats! Just let me run and hide when BARBIE FASHION 2099 comes along...

Jeff Elbel
elbel@uxh.cso.uiuc.edu

There's been talk ...

Just a quick note to say that GR2099 #5 contained one of the best "defining moments" of a character I have read in some time. This was on pages 26 - 27, where GR finds his human "meatware" body, comes to a realization and acceptance of who he now is, and cremates his own former flesh. A true evolutionary leap, with subtle spiritual connotations.

No going back, indeed. His old meatware is now "well done" ... as is the work of the creative team on GR2099.

Garry Oppenhuis
72550,3523@compuserve.com

NEXTISSUE

"Under New Management!" is the story title, which refers not merely to editorial control, but to the entire country: one nation under Doom!

2099 A.D.

FIND OUT YOUR PLACE IN

2099'S NEW WORLD ORDER

THIS MARCH.

MARVEL COMICS

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